

yo that those tall men were sinners above all the tall men that they suffered such things, or those eighteen on whom the tower of Sodom fell and blew them, think yo they were sinners above all men? I tell you nay." But why attempt to account for such a mystery of God's providence as the self-righteous heathen do when they thrust their afflicted ones forth? Nor is it necessary we should let us be humble. The knowledge our Heavenly Father withholds from us, it is not necessary we should have. Even so Father, it is Thy will that such things should be. But the knowledge that such things are placed a grave individual responsibility on each one who knows, not to pry into hidden mysteries, but, with our might, to deal with existing facts. And surely there is cause for thankfulness, that where cure is impossible, alleviation of bodily suffering is certain; thankfulness, that comfort and kindness may be ministered to the comfortless and the wretched, and shelter provided for the exposed and unprotected. And beyond and above all should our gratitude to God arise that we have the opportunity, and may have the privilege of being part, if only an insignificant part, of the means by which the Gospel may be conveyed to those who, in this perishing world, are dead while they live, who have no anchor of the soul sure and steadfast within the veil.

Christian charity, as evinced towards the poor leper, is far reaching in its effects, beyond the immediate objects of it. For instance, we read such words as these:—"The few Japanese who know of our desire" (to establish homes for lepers) "are full of approbation. One of our Christians said to me, 'It will do more for Christianity in Japan than anything that has been done. My people can argue as cleverly as your people about religion, but they know nothing of such love as this.' And from the same paper, and the garrison doctor to the writer of it, a missionary of the C. M. S., "only Christians would think of such a thing."

The Christian lepers become in their turn, as opportunity occurs, missionaries of the manifold grace of God. As an illustration of this, an interesting case may be stated. Six converts left the institution at Ambala, wandering down to Tarn Taran, Punjab, where there is a large Government leper settlement, with upwards of 200 leper inmates. When the little band appeared before the gates, begging for admission, they were ruthlessly repulsed by the native in charge. They must renounce Christ or they should not enter. They must not even dare to buy food at the asylum store. "Deny Christ we cannot and will not," they reply; "we did not come to Him for food and shelter merely, but for the bread which perisheth not; to cast that away would be sheer madness." For more than a week, without shelter, and almost without food, yet strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, these six lepers sat by the wayside till the native doctor, fearing the story might reach the ear of his superior, the English civil surgeon, reluctantly admitted them. Their influence soon told on their fellow inmates as they spoke of the effects of the Gospel on their own lives. And graciously so blessed their efforts to work for Him, that the Rev. G. Guilford of the C. M. S. found, on his arrival, five or six of the inmates well grounded in Christian truth and anxious for baptism. And within the space of a few months, this number has increased to twenty-two, all won over to the faith, by the Christian lepers from Ambala. And thus they become spiritually helpful to one another. Many instances can be cited of their helpfulness to each other in their misery. Such as, those without hands carrying those without feet, and those with hands in turn working for both. The distribution of the Communion is another most touching; the bread being placed on the poor fingerless hands and so borne to the mouth, or, it may be, placed within the lips, and the wine poured out of a spoon into the mouth; and the eager upturned faces of those truly hungering and thirsting for the true bread, of which the bread and wine are the symbols.

It is very necessary that the lepers should be kept apart from the community

at large, for although not supposed to be infectious, with ordinary care and precaution against contact, yet it seems to be contagious. And if, for the sake of society, it is expedient that they be kept apart from the healthy, it is certainly incumbent upon society to provide them with suitable shelter. This is a duty which society owes, as well as for its own protection, to the leper. The pictures drawn of the uncared for leper and community of lepers, are most appalling, and the wonder is that the disease has not spread even more than it has; and also from the natural tendency being to hide the knowledge of the dire malady, as long as possible, the consequences to the leper being so fearful, the horror to the poor victim that accrues on the taint becoming known. Tainted men and women handling the food they sell to the healthy, tainted nurses fondling healthy children, tainted servants attending to household wants! If comfortable refuges were only provided for them, and if they were to be shown that no disgrace attached to them on account of their misfortune, it does seem as if matters might improve, and the scourge be in some measure abated in time.

One very interesting detail of the mission, is the separation of the untainted children from the diseased parents. The disease as a rule, does not seem to develop itself in early infancy, and if the children can be separated at an early enough age, there is a great and well grounded hope that they may escape altogether. "Medical opinion is divided," we read under the heading "Children of Lepers," "as to whether leprosy is hereditary; but, in any case there is much reason to fear that children, continuing in contact with leprous parents, may contract the disease. Practical experience points to the conclusion that by isolating the children while still untouched by the disease they may be preserved from it altogether. At Almora the system of separation has been followed for many years. Several children in Miss Budden's school have grown up, yet in one case only has the disorder appeared; in the case of those who have married there has been no appearance of it in their offspring." Surely here also is a duty society owes to itself, and to the lepers and to generations yet unborn.

Refuges also are wanted for European, which term includes all non-natives, victims of the disease; these are by no means few, and probably greater even in number than is known, from the effort to conceal on account of the hardships connected with the knowledge of the existence of the disease. It is even more than suspected that many of these poor unfortunates steal away to their native lands, to hide themselves and their troubles in by-streets and alleys, there to drag out a life of misery, and finally to die, having possibly spread the contagion among their healthy fellow-citizens. Homes, absolutely separate from the native lepers, ought to be provided for these others, as natives and non-natives cannot be classified together, for many reasons easy to understand. This is a branch of the mission's work that cannot but appeal very strongly to our sympathies. There must be many in this land who have relatives and friends in India and eastern lands.

Willing hearts, and prayers, and men, and money are all wanted, for such a stupendous work. The money asked for seems small when measured by the extent of the work to be done; and with the interest in the mission diffused as it is through all classes, and in many lands, the burden need not fall heavily on individual givers. But what is wanted, is wanted urgently; and doubtless, much more than is asked for could be profitably used. The funds seem to be most economically expended, the Society working through the agency of the established missions of all Protestant denominations, and thoroughly unsectarian. Its beginning was indeed the day of small things, but not therefore to be despised. It has gradually and steadily enlarged its borders, and now, from the day when a few poor lepers were being cared for here and there by loving souls, asylums and refuges are being built all over India and the East.

The committee in their 1892 report record nine asylums of their own in India; one in

Burmah; their first leper hospital in China has been erected in China at Hangchow, under care of Dr. Duncan Main of the C. M. S. Five homes for untainted children of leprous parents; and children are supported in three other places, where, as yet, there is no home. "Altogether seventy-six children saved from the awful disease—seventy six immortal souls to be won for the Master's kingdom." In addition to maintaining these sixteen institutions, nineteen others are subsidized; three of them, containing altogether two hundred and forty lepers, are assisted to a large extent, and in all three, the word of God is faithfully taught, much blessing resulting therefrom. Eight asylums are subsidized to a lesser extent, and in these Christian work is regularly carried on; and in eight other institutions, Christian instruction is provided. The Chinese work is yet in its infancy but growing apace.

Twelve different missions or societies are co-operated with through their agents. The list includes a large number of societies of all the Protestant denominations—the Committee co-operating with the agents of twelve different Missionary societies.

All the institutions are filled up as soon as they are ready for occupation, and the cry is still for more, the supply being quite inadequate to the demand. It must be a terrible trial to have to refuse admittance to the poor unfortunates, for lack of room.

There are said to be at least half a million lepers in India; a much larger number in China, it is supposed; two hundred thousand in Japan; a large number in Burmah and in other eastern lands.

From seven hundred and fifty dollars to fifteen hundred dollars will build an asylum it is presumed, according to size and situation; two hundred and fifty dollars to five hundred dollars will build a home for the children.

Thirty dollars a year will support an adult leper; twenty dollars a year will support a child; a hundred dollars a year will supply a Christian teacher.

In 1891 twenty-nine baptisms are recorded; in 1892 considerably over two hundred were baptized.

In 1891 the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars was called for, to carry on the work, and the response was twenty-five thousand, five hundred and sixty dollars. The way in which gifts came in was wonderful, from a shilling collected in half pence, from extremely poor women, by one of themselves, to over six hundred pounds (three thousand dollars) from one generous donor. Many demands for the ensuing year are noted in the report of 1892, from which the foregoing figures and items have been culled.

The Board of Management is now a very large one, comprising the names of men and women of influence. The list is headed as patroness, "The Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava" well known in Canada; the president is His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Dublin; followed by a long list of vice-presidents, and a very large committee of distinguished men and women, and by the other officials of the Mission, ending with the name of Wellesley C. Bailey, so favourably known to many of us, as secretary and superintendent.

This paper has reached to much larger dimensions than there was any thought of in the writer's mind, when the first word was penned; but the subject proved to be so large, and so interesting, that the difficulty was to abridge, or even to bring to a close; and to shorten might have left some points touched upon, obscure.

Authorities and sources of information for the statements made, have only been formally acknowledged in a very few instances, but all may be verified at any time by reference to the published records of the Mission, to which this paper is entirely indebted for whatever may be of interest or of use. And, the writer would only add, a perusal of these records would more than amply repay the time and trouble, in the gain of most interesting and profitable information. And may God Himself forward the work of the mission to lepers in India and the East, and bless His servants who are doing what they can, and put it into the hearts of many others to respond to the urgent call for prayer and sympathy and the fruits of a living faith.

A.B.